

# **OPENNESS POLICY AND PLAN**



May 2001

Office of Safety Regulation

U.S. Department of Energy  
Office of River Protection  
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# PREFACE

As directed by Congress in Section 3139 of the *Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999*, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) established the Office of River Protection (ORP) at the Hanford Site to manage the River Protection Project (RPP), formerly known as the Tank Waste Remediation System. ORP is responsible for the safe storage, retrieval, treatment, and disposal of the high level nuclear waste stored in the 177 underground tanks at Hanford.

The initial concept for treatment and disposal of the high level wastes at Hanford was to use private industry to design, construct, and operate a Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) to process the waste. The concept was for DOE to enter into a fixed-price contract for the Contractor to build and operate a facility to treat the waste according to DOE specifications. In 1996, DOE selected two contractors to begin design of a WTP to accomplish this mission. In 1998, one of the contractors was eliminated, and design of the WTP was continued. However, in May 2000, DOE chose to terminate the privatization contract and seek new bidders under a different contract strategy. In December 2000, a team led by Bechtel National, Inc. was selected to continue design of the WTP and to subsequently build and commission the WTP.

A key element of the River Protection Project Waste Treatment Plant (RPP-WTP) is DOE regulation of safety through a specifically chartered, dedicated Office of Safety Regulation (OSR). The OSR reports directly to the ORP Manager. The regulation by the OSR is authorized by the document entitled *Policy for Radiological, Nuclear, and Process Safety Regulation of the River Protection Project Waste Treatment Plant Contractor* (DOE/RL-96-25) (referred to as the Policy) and implemented through the document entitled *Memorandum of Agreement for the Execution of Radiological, Nuclear, Process Safety Regulation of the RPP-WTP Contractor* (DOE/RL-96-26) (referred to as the MOA). These two documents provide the basis for the safety regulation of the RPP-WTP at Hanford.

The foundation of both the Policy and the MOA is that the mission of removal and immobilization of the existing large quantities of tank waste by the RPP-WTP Contractor must be accomplished safely, effectively, and efficiently.

The Policy maintains the essential elements of the regulatory program established by DOE in 1996 for the privatization contracts. The MOA clarifies the DOE organizational relationships and responsibilities for safety regulation of the RPP-WTP. The MOA provides a basis for key DOE officials to commit to teamwork in implementing the policy and achieve adequate safety of RPP-WTP activities.

The Policy, the MOA, the RPP-WTP Contract, and the four documents incorporated in the Contract define the essential elements of the regulatory program being executed by the OSR. The four documents incorporated into the Contract (and also in the MOA) are as follows:

*Concept of the DOE Process for Radiological, Nuclear, and Process Safety Regulation of the RPP Waste Treatment Plant Contractor*, DOE-96-0005,

*DOE Process for Radiological, Nuclear, and Process Safety Regulation of the RPP Waste Treatment Plant Contractor*, DOE/RL-96-0003,

*Top-Level Radiological, Nuclear, and Process Safety Standards and Principles for the RPP Waste Treatment Plant Contractor*, DOE/RL-96-0006, and

*Process for Establishing a Set of Radiological, Nuclear, and Process Safety Standards and Requirements for the RPP Waste Treatment Plant Contractor*, DOE/RL-96-0004.

DOE patterned its safety regulation of the RPP-WTP Contractor to be consistent with the concepts and principles of good regulation (reliability, clarity, openness, efficiency, and independence) used by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). In addition, the DOE principles of integrated safety management were built into the regulatory program for design, construction, operation, and deactivation of the facility. The regulatory program for nuclear safety permits waste treatment services to occur on a timely, predictable, and stable basis, with attention to safety consistent with that which would occur from safety regulation by an external agency. DOE established OSR as a dedicated regulatory organization to be a single point of DOE contact for nuclear safety oversight and approvals for the WTP Contractor. The OSR performs nuclear safety review, approval, inspection, and verification activities for ORP using the NRC principles of good regulation while defining how the Contractor shall implement the principles of standards-based integrated safety management.

A key feature of this regulatory process is its definition of how the standards-based integrated safety management principles are implemented to develop a necessary and sufficient set of standards and requirements for the design, construction, operation, and deactivation of the RPP-WTP facility. This process meets the expectations of the DOE necessary and sufficient closure process (subsequently renamed Work Smart Standards process) in DOE Policy 450.3, *Authorizing Use of the Necessary and Sufficient Process for Standards-based Environment, Safety and Health Management*, and is intended to be a DOE approved process under DOE Acquisition Regulations, DEAR 970.5204-2, *Laws, Regulations and DOE Directives*, Section (c). DOE approval of the contractor-derived standards is assigned to the OSR.

The RPP-WTP Contractor has direct responsibility for WTP safety. DOE requires the Contractor to integrate safety into work planning and execution. This integrated safety management process emphasizes that the Contractor's direct responsibility for ensuring that safety is an integral part of mission accomplishment. DOE, through its safety regulation and management program, verifies that the Contractor achieves adequate safety by complying with approved safety requirements.

All documents issued by the Office of Safety Regulation are available to the public through the DOE Public Reading Room located at the Consolidated Information Center, Washington State University, Room 101L, Richland, Washington.  
Copies may be purchased for a duplication fee.

## RECORD OF REVISION

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## **Openness Policy**

Regulation of the safety of the River Protection Project Waste Treatment Plant (RPP-WTP) at the Hanford Site shall be transacted publicly and candidly. Information that the Office of Safety Regulation of the RPP-WTP Contractor uses to make its decisions shall be publicly available, with due consideration of limited rights data and other protected information.

The involvement of the employees, Tribal Nations, stakeholders, and the public in decisions concerning safety regulation is welcomed and encouraged. The involvement improves the processes and products and helps to ensure safety.

All members of the public are provided the same access to information and opportunity for involvement in the process. In addition, the Office of Safety Regulation recognizes its special obligations to inform and involve the Tribal Nations.

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# Openness Plan

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

This Openness Plan is addressed to interested parties: employees, Tribal Nations, stakeholders, the public, the River Protection Project Contractor, and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), including the Office of Safety Regulation (OSR) of the River Protection Project Waste Treatment Plant (RPP-WTP) Contractor. Not all sections of the Openness Plan may be applicable or of interest to all groups; however, this Plan describes the full extent of the OSR openness activities. The OSR Openness Policy and Plan are fully consistent with the Office of River Protection Communications Plan and Openness Policy and Plan.

## 1.1 REGULATION

The DOE established the Office of Safety Regulation to regulate the design, construction and operation of the planned RPP-WTP facilities. The mission of the OSR is to establish acceptable performance and safety standards that will assure adequate<sup>1</sup> safety, and then, through oversight, ensure that throughout the design, construction, commissioning, operation and deactivation, these standards are met.

The Contractor has primary responsibility for safety. DOE requires the Contractor to integrate safety into all facets of work planning and execution. This Integrated Safety Management process emphasizes that the Contractor has direct responsibility for ensuring that safety<sup>2</sup> is an integral part of the work. DOE, through its regulatory program, is responsible for verifying that the Contractor designs, constructs and operates a safe facility by complying with approved safety requirements.

DOE regulates the Contractor's actions for safety under the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act as well as according to applicable public laws and regulations. Therefore, safety regulation is accomplished under both the requirements of DOE nuclear safety rules,<sup>3</sup> and by contract between the Contractor and the DOE.<sup>4</sup> The law and the contract define the boundaries for OSR regulation to which this Openness Plan applies.

The regulatory process requires that the Contractor propose and justify specific standards that will be met, rather than being required to use existing DOE general-purpose standards. With this added contractor responsibility for safety comes increased accountability, not only to the DOE,

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<sup>1</sup> Adequate safety does not mean "at the limit" or "just barely enough." Rather it is defined by solid requirements and a rigorous process the contractor must follow.

<sup>2</sup> Within Integrated Safety Management the term "safety" is used synonymously with the term "environment, safety, and health" to encompass protection of the public, the workers, and the environment. The OSR is responsible for radiological, nuclear, and process safety regulation. The Environmental Protection Agency and Washington State, through the Departments of Ecology and Health, are the primary environmental regulators.

<sup>3</sup> 10 CFR 820, "Procedural Rules for DOE Nuclear Activities;" 10 CFR 830 "Nuclear Safety Management," 10 CFR 835, "Occupational Radiation Protection," 10 CFR 707, "Contractor Employee Protection," and Compliance Orders issues pursuant to 10 CFR 820, Subpart C.

<sup>4</sup> Contract DE-AC27-01RV14136 between DOE and Bechtel National, Inc., dated December 11, 2000.

but also to the employees, Tribal Nations, stakeholders and the public. Input from the interested parties can significantly assist the process. Therefore, the OSR and the Contractor want to create openness to regulatory activities so that input can be obtained from interested parties.

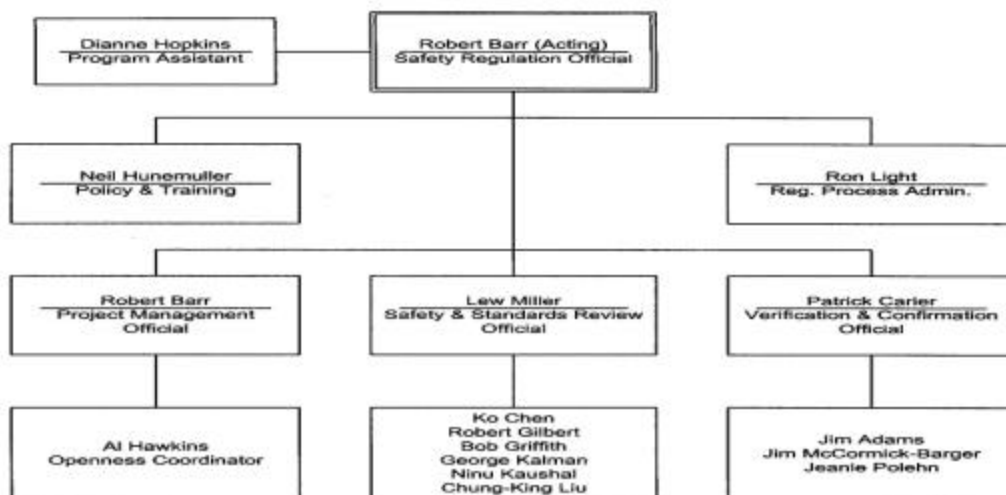
Openness is an essential principle of the agreements that created the OSR and is cited as an implementing principle in DOE/RL-96-25, *Policy for Safety Regulation of RPP-WTP Contractor*. DOE/RL-96-26, *Memorandum of Agreement for the Execution of Safety Regulation of the RPP-WTP Contractor* contains specific direction on implementing openness. The OSR believes it is obligated by this principle to ensure that the entire regulatory process occurs in a way that is open to the public, employees, stakeholders, and Tribal Nations.

Openness also means that information, which the OSR uses to make its decisions, is concurrently available to the public unless the information contains "limited rights data."<sup>5</sup> Few Contractor regulatory submittals contain limited rights data.

The OSR performs expert reviews. The OSR recognizes that those reviews improve when more viewpoints are considered, so employee, public, stakeholder, and Tribal Nation comments are encouraged. The OSR also emphasizes openness because it promotes responsible behavior on the part of both the Contractor and the regulator.

The OSR organization as of May 2001 is shown below. The OSR Openness Coordinator, A. R. Hawkins, is responsible for implementing this Openness Plan; involving others as needed and as noted in the Plan.

**Figure 1. Office of Safety Regulation Organization**



<sup>5</sup> The current Contract defines "limited rights data" and provides for such information to be protected from public disclosure. The prior Contract used the term "proprietary information" to describe information protected from public disclosure. OSR Management Directive 2.1, *Information Management*, describes the process for determining the classification of information and for nondisclosure of protected information under the old and new Contracts. The term "limited rights data" will be used throughout this document for information protected from public disclosure.

## 2.0 OPENNESS

The purpose of safety regulation is to establish acceptable performance standards and, through regulatory oversight, ensure that throughout the life of the project, these safety standards are met. Input from interested parties can significantly assist in this effort. Openness is, therefore, an essential part of the OSR regulatory process.

The OSR believes that safety regulation is the public's business. Therefore, the model for its regulatory work has these basic components:

- All decision meetings with the Contractor are open.
- Regulatory submittals and correspondence are released routinely.
- Public comments on Contractor submissions are welcomed.
- Meetings are documented, and this documentation is made public.
- Special care is needed for handling limited rights data.
- To prevent undue delays in the project, OSR openness recognizes the need for a continuous and flexible interaction between the OSR and interested parties.

The OSR will respond to public comments. The public can comment at any time, but schedule milestones must be taken into consideration to ensure that interested parties are heard and that the process moves forward.

The OSR published RL/REG-97-10, *Regulatory Plan*, which identifies how the safety of the proposed RPP-WTP facilities is being assured. This Regulatory Plan contains the following provisions for openness:

- To make information concerning the DOE regulatory program and its activities accessible to the public, and to provide an opportunity for public input (in raising regulatory issues and having those issues examined).
- To provide for the protection of some information. Limited rights data is protected from release as public information.
- Only if a regulatory decision must be made quickly to ensure safety does safety take precedence over the need for extended openness.
- Support the premise that all pertinent information, not intentionally withheld for expressed reasons, shall be available to the public.

This Openness Plan shows how the OSR actively solicits comments from interested parties on the safety of the facilities proposed by the Contractor and on the regulatory process itself. Input

into the regulatory process is sought as early as possible so that issues and concerns are identified and addressed before decisions are made.

When the Contractor requests an authorization, such as start of construction, it is the OSR's responsibility to ensure that the proposed authorization complies with the law and contract. Thus, the OSR responses to these authorizations must be visible to interested parties. Interested parties may make their concerns known to the Contractor or to the OSR, each having a responsibility to respond.

It is important that interested parties have confidence in the decisions of the OSR. This Plan shows how the OSR will communicate consistently with interested parties and how its regulatory performance will be clearly visible at all times.

## **2.1 INTERESTED PARTIES**

The intent is to provide all interested parties with the same opportunities to be heard, to receive information on, and to be involved in, the regulatory process. The OSR will make a specific effort to understand the interests and concerns of the Tribal Nations. Additionally, the OSR recognizes certain stakeholders and interest groups who have a specific interest in the regulation of the RPP-WTP facility.

Interest groups include, but are not limited to:

- The Tribal Nations
- The Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) members and committees (Central Plateau/River Corridor; Public Communications; Tanks; Human Health and Safety; and Finance and Contract Management)
- Washington and Oregon State agencies
- The news media
- Hanford employees
- Unions
- Local residents
- Federal agencies
- Congress
- State and local governments
- Regional environmental public interest groups.

### 3.0 APPROACH

The OSR openness plan includes the following activities:

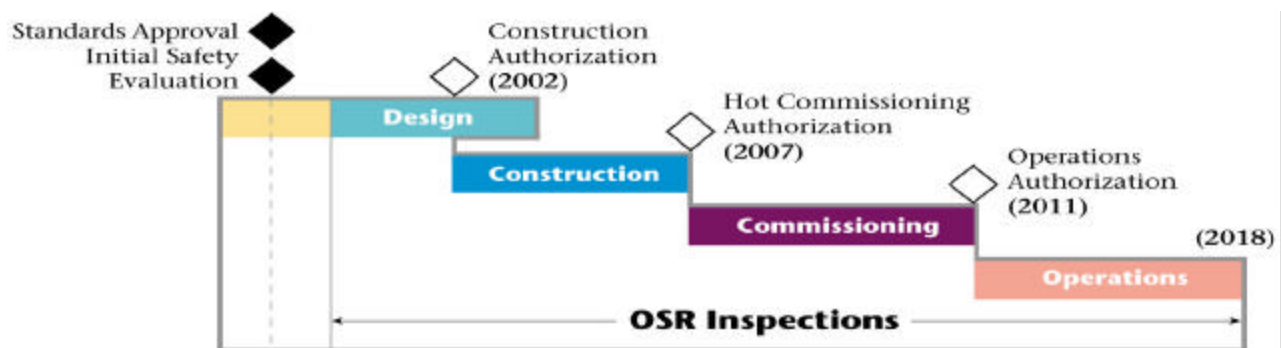
- The OSR listens to interested parties. This is done by providing independent opportunities to comment and by meeting and conducting an open dialogue. Interested party comments are distributed to appropriate members of the OSR staff for consideration and are made part of the regulatory record.
- The OSR speaks to interested parties. It makes information on regulatory activities available and ensures the information is current.
- The OSR obtains feedback, responds to comments, and ensures that those providing input understand how their comments affect the regulatory process.

The OSR will engage interested parties factually. The OSR recognizes the importance of making objective decisions from among a range of possible solutions. Presentations and informational meetings will provide the background, and speak to options considered and to the basis for decisions, so that relevant input can be obtained before decisions are made.

### 4.0 SCHEDULE

Openness is an ongoing process. A goal of the OSR is to ensure productive and effective two-way communication. The mechanisms for communicating with the OSR are in place.

The current schedule of the major regulatory actions for RPP-WTP activities is shown below. Significant regulatory actions, Standards Approval and an Initial Safety Evaluation have been completed. A full schedule of regulatory activities, including Openness activities, is maintained on the OSR website.<sup>6</sup> Each major regulatory action will provide an opportunity for interested parties to comment.



**Figure 2. Current Schedule for RPP-WTP Activities**

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.hanford.gov/osr/osr.asp>

## 5.0 LISTENING TO INTERESTED PARTIES

The public, which includes employees, stakeholders, and local residents, is encouraged to make their views known to the OSR staff. There is no need to wait for an official comment period. There are a number of ways of communicating with the OSR:

- **Written comments** may be submitted to:  
  
U.S. DOE Office of River Protection  
Office of Safety Regulation  
Attention: COMMENTS  
P.O. Box 450, H6-60  
Richland, WA 99352.
- **Written comments** may also be sent via facsimile to (509) 376-3661.
- **Written comments** may also be sent via the OSR's Internet website (<http://www.hanford.gov/osr/osr.asp>) feedback mail link.
- **E-mail** can be sent to the OSR [osr\\_feedback@rl.gov](mailto:osr_feedback@rl.gov)
- **Voice mail** messages may be left by calling 1-800-253-2723 (locally 376-4092). The toll-free number also provides information about forthcoming meetings of potential interest.

The OSR wants interested parties to provide comments regarding safety and/or contractor safety performance at any time. The OSR will provide timely responses to all comments. The actions that the OSR may take when the Contractor fails to meet regulatory commitments are detailed in RL/REG-98-06, *Corrective Action/Enforcement Action Program Description*, available at the OSR website.

## 5.1 LISTENING TO THE TRIBAL NATIONS

The Hanford Site is located primarily on land ceded to the United States under separate treaties with different Tribal Nations. The Yakama Indian Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and the Nez Perce Tribe, therefore, have treaty rights at Hanford. Tribal governments have a unique legal relationship with the United States government as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, treaties, statutes, and court decisions. The United States and the State of Washington have committed to a government-to-government relationship with Native American Tribes. Rather than seeking tribal participation through public forums, the Office of River Protection and the OSR consult directly with the tribal governments before taking any action that may affect their rights and interests, as outlined in the DOE American Indian Policy.

The Wanapum People also are affected by Hanford decisions and, although not a Federally recognized tribe, are included within this document, and within the ORP Communications Plan and Openness Policy and Plan.

The OSR will provide topical presentations when requested by the Tribal Nations and welcomes comments, questions, and input from the Tribal Nations. Important Tribal Nation contacts are indicated in the following table.

<b>Tribal Nation</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Contact(s)</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation	PO Box 638 Pendleton, OR 97801	Mr. Richard Gay Grants and Contracts Officer	509-946-0645
Nez Perce Tribe	PO Box 365 Lapwai, ID 83540	Mr. Patrick Sobotta Director of ER and WM Program	208-843-7375
Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation	2808 Main Street Union Gap, WA 98903	Mr. Russell Jim, Manager, ER and WM Program	509-946-0101
Wanapum People	Grant County P.U.D. PO Box 878 Ephrata, WA 98823	Ms. Lenora Seelatsee	509-754-3541 (answering system, leave message)

**Table 1. Tribal Nation Contacts and Addresses.**

All contacts and requests made to or from any of the Tribal Nations will be coordinated through the Office of Intergovernmental, Public and Institutional Affairs (IPI), Indian Nations Program, Kevin Clarke (509-376-6332)

## **5.2 LISTENING TO THE HAB**

The OSR also involves the interested public through interface with the HAB and its committees.

The OSR maintains a regulatory schedule that projects activities several years in advance to allow the HAB, and other interested parties, to decide where they would like to be involved. The OSR requests opportunities to present information at meetings of the HAB before important regulatory decisions and actions occur. The OSR also will respond to HAB requests for discussions of the program, its reports, and other data or information regarding regulatory activities. The OSR Openness Coordinator coordinates meetings with the Office of River Protection Public Involvement Team Lead who will coordinate efforts with the IPI Public Involvement Manager. The Public Involvement Team Lead along with the OSR Openness Coordinator will assure that appropriate staff attends the meetings of the HAB and its committees. The OSR will be available at HAB meetings where regulation of the RPP-WTP facilities are discussed to answer ad hoc questions and to meet informally with interested public.

The OSR meets with the Tank Waste Health, Safety and Environmental Protection and the Public Involvement and Communication Committees of the HAB. The OSR will seek the advice

of the Public Involvement and Communications Committee regarding how best to communicate with the public and to obtain public input.

The Office of River Protection Public Involvement Team Lead, Mr. Peter Bengtson (509-373-9931) coordinates HAB activities with Ms. Gail McClure, IPI Public Involvement Manager (509-373-5647).

### **5.3 LISTENING TO SITE EMPLOYEES**

The OSR encourages employees to make their views known on the regulation of the RPP-WTP to the OSR, to their managers, the OSR Openness Coordinator, to the responsible Contractor or directly to their DOE contact. Employees may take advantage of any or all of the methods of communication established for interested parties.

Through the ORP Office of Communications, the OSR may use site and local media as a resource to inform site employees of progress in regulation and to encourage employee feedback. Resources available through Communications include the *Hanford Reach* (site newspaper), all employee announcements, newspaper ads, calendar of events in area papers, and the local public access television channel. The OSR welcomes invitations to appear at employee gatherings -- at clubs, lunchtime gatherings or at any location convenient to the employees.

## **6.0 PROVIDING ACCESS FOR THE MEDIA**

The OSR recognizes that the press and television media are significant avenues for informing the public of regulatory progress and of opportunities to participate in the regulatory process. When requested, the OSR will meet with individual members of the media to determine what is of interest to the media and in what format and in what detail the news could best be used. The OSR will provide timely responses to requests for information.

The Openness Coordinator serves as the "clearing house" for media requests and is responsible for coordinating contacts with the Office of River Protection Media Relations Manager. Any media requests for regulatory information should be directed to the OSR Openness Coordinator to ensure a timely response. The OSR Openness Coordinator and the ORP Media Relations Manager will involve other members of the River Protection Project when needed. The OSR will not be an advocate for the success of the project since independence of the regulatory effort is essential and since the intent is to provide the press with objective and factual information.

## **7.0 INTERFACES WITHIN HANFORD**

The Washington State Department of Ecology maintains a toll-free information line at 1-800-321-2008. Interested parties may use this number to be added to the Hanford cleanup mailing list or to request copies of the *Hanford Update*, a bimonthly newsletter. The *Hanford Update* provides general information about cleanup and compliance activities. It also contains information on public meetings, workshops and other opportunities to participate in decisions



affecting Hanford. It includes programmatic information on both ORP and Richland Operations Office (RL) matters.

The ORP Director, Office of Communication, is the primary resource for openness. The OSR informs the Director of pre-scheduled communication with the public.

Specific Office of Communications support comprises:

- **Director** - policy matters concerning external communications  
Contact: Erik Olds, Acting Director (509-372-8656)
- **Media Relations** - general support, a review of documents intended for public release and the preparation of press releases  
Contact: Erik Olds (509-372-8656)
- **ORP Openness Coordinator** – coordinating all comments regarding RPP openness policy and plans  
Contact: Sharon Braswell (509-376-8503)
- **Public Involvement** - the primary interface for the HAB, assists in preparing public presentations, with assistance in scheduling meetings  
Contact: Peter Bengtson (509-373-9931)
- **Indian Nations Program** - interface with the Tribal Nations  
Contact: Kevin Clark (509-376-6332)
- **Freedom of Information and Public Reading Room** - information release, internet integration and internet resource issues, reading room issues  
Contacts: Yvonne Sherman (509-376-6216)  
Cindy Moody-Brock (509-376-8368) [LMSI - Site Web Master]

The ORP is responsible for the technical and programmatic aspects of the RPP-WTP Contract. ORP maintains many of the same openness interfaces as the OSR. The OSR will coordinate communications with ORP. The ORP point-of-contact is Erik Olds (509-372-8656).

The Contractor has a Public Affairs representative. The OSR informs this representative of communications with interested parties and coordinate communications when needed.

## 8.0 INFORMATION SOURCES FOR INTERESTED PARTIES

Because the input of interested parties is extremely important to the OSR, a number of channels have been established to provide information so that interested parties understand how the regulation of Contractor work proceeds. This section discusses those sources of information.

## **8.1 MAILING LIST**

The OSR maintains a mailing and notification list of those who have expressed an interest in being informed about RPP-WTP regulatory activities. Individuals, who would like to be placed on the mailing list, can notify the OSR through any of the ways noted earlier. The OSR Openness Coordinator is responsible for establishing and maintaining the mailing list.

The OSR prepares a triannual report of regulatory activities. This report is provided to interested individuals and organizations on the mailing list. General Services Support Contractor (GSSC) staff prepare the report for the OSR Openness Coordinator.

## **8.2 DOCUMENTS**

Documents are a "window" into regulatory activities. Therefore, the OSR makes these documents available to interested parties. The major regulatory policies and directions, actions resulting in documented evaluations, and the current schedule for the OSR inspection program, are all available to interested parties in the U.S. DOE Public Reading Room and on the OSR Internet website.

Additionally, the OSR will make as much other relevant information as possible available to interested parties. This includes all other OSR products (letters, memos, meeting minutes), with the following two formal exceptions:

- Documents or portions of documents that contain limited rights data as defined in the Contract are not made available to the public. The OSR minimizes the amount of information that is categorized in this way. Some documents, from which limited rights data are deleted, are released to avoid the whole document from being made unavailable. The Openness Coordinator reviews and concurs with any limited rights data determination.
- Records pertaining to individuals that are protected from public disclosure by the Privacy Act of 1974 and business records protected under the provisions of Federal Procurement Regulations.

To avoid overwhelming interested parties with paperwork, administrative records of the OSR that do not influence a regulatory action are not routinely released because of their limited value. Administrative records include delegations of authority, requisitions, travel records, pay and leave information, and reports from internal tracking and control systems.

As part of making the regulatory process visible to the public, the OSR will make all changes to the Contractor's Authorization Basis<sup>7</sup> available for public review and comment for at least 14 days before regulatory action is taken. The changes will be posted to the OSR website. Comments received by the OSR on authorization basis changes or other regulatory activities will

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<sup>7</sup> The Authorization Basis is the composite of information provided by a contractor in response to radiological, nuclear, and process safety requirements, which forms the basis upon which the U.S. Department of Energy grants permission to perform regulated activities.

be made part of the public record and will be scheduled for review and action, as appropriate. The OSR will not edit comments.

The OSR does not generate nor accept classified information as defined by DOE Memorandum, "Widespread or Public Release of Information," dated August 6, 1997. Any questions regarding the definitions or handling of classified information should be addressed to the RL Office of Security and Emergency Services.

### 8.3 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings are announced in advance -- the notices are placed in the *Hanford Reach*, on the OSR's 1-800 information line, in the Triannual report, in the *Hanford Update* and/or on the OSR Internet web site.

The OSR will consult separately with each Tribal Nation regarding their need to meet on topics of interest.

The OSR holds periodic (typically monthly) meetings with the Contractor on technical topics of regulatory interest. These topical meetings are open to interested parties except where limited rights data are discussed. Interested parties are encouraged to attend and observe the regulatory process and interactions between the Contractor and the OSR. Meetings are open to assure the public that no special consideration is being given to the Contractor. However, since these are working meetings between the OSR and the Contractor, interested parties are asked to reserve their comments and to submit them after the meeting through other available channels. Meeting summaries are available on the OSR Internet web site and meeting minutes are on file in the U.S. DOE Public Reading Room.

The OSR will hold formal meetings specifically for soliciting public input at each major regulatory action (see Section 4.0). The OSR will make formal public notification of the specific details of the meeting at least 14 calendar days in advance. These public meetings will be advertised in a number of ways including, through the Internet, through advertisement in the Tri-City Herald, and through notices placed in the Calendar of Events sections in regional area newspapers. Meetings generally are held in public locations in Richland, Washington. However, other regional locations can be arranged if needed. Comments received during these meetings are formally recorded and acted upon, as described in Section 8.7, "Actions" of this plan. Responses to comments become a formal part of the final OSR evaluation of the Contractor's readiness to proceed.

Additionally, the OSR will consult individually with each of the Tribal Nations before each major regulatory action.

Because public meetings are such an important part of openness, responsibilities are briefly summarized below. The responsibilities and processes are more completely described in the OSR Management Directives, which are available on the OSR web site.

The **Safety Regulation Official** is responsible for deciding on the types of public meetings that should be held and when they should be held.

The **Openness Coordinator** is responsible for:

- Ensuring that meetings are open to the public with due consideration of limited rights data.
- Coordinating the scheduling of public meetings with the ORP PI Team Lead to ensure that there are no conflicts with other DOE meetings.
- Ensuring that meetings are noticed through the OSR 1-800 number and Internet web site, and other mechanisms as appropriate.
- Ensuring that public meetings are conducted efficiently according to the agenda.
- Ensuring that public meetings are recorded and a Meeting Summary is prepared.
- Ensuring that documentation of public meetings is made available to the public. A Meeting Summary shall be provided to the public through the U.S. DOE Public Reading Room and through the OSR Internet web site generally within 20 working days of the meeting.
- Ensuring that the OSR staff is provided with information coming from public meetings to make it available at all levels of regulatory activities.
- For meetings associated with a major regulatory action, ensuring that:
  - Interested members of the public who indicate a desire to speak at the meeting are able to register on a sign-up sheet.
  - Interested parties who indicate a desire to place themselves on the OSR mailing list are able to do so.
  - Time limitations for interested parties to make comment (e.g. time limits for individual speakers and on the overall public comment period) are known.
  - Meeting summaries include sufficient information to identify comments related to specific OSR actions or OSR activities in general. Such comments shall be provided to responsible OSR staff for consideration in relation to regulatory business.

Members of the OSR are responsible for providing information to the Openness Coordinator on meetings that should be open to the public.

## **8.4 PRESS RELEASES**

On a case-by-case basis, press releases will be issued to local, regional, and national media to inform the public of (1) significant events; (2) regulatory decisions; (3) technical reports; and 4) other pertinent information and data regarding the River Protection Project. The content and context of the release, approval of the distribution and issuance of each press release will be coordinated with ORP Media Relations Manager.

## **8.5 THE OSR WEB SITE**

The primary goal of the OSR web site is to provide useful, readily accessible, and timely information to interested parties who have access to the Internet. A secondary goal is to allow rapid two-way communication through an e-mail link and feedback form. The OSR would like to know from the web browsers how useful the site information is and how the site might be improved and encourages them to use the feedback form.

The OSR's web site on the Internet, <http://www.hanford.gov/osr/osr.asp>, provides several types of information including:

- General information about the OSR
- Organizational information
- The calendar of events and current information on regulatory activities
- Public documents, including meeting minutes
- Documents available for public comment and related public comments that have been received
- A listing of all publicly available documents
- Electronic mail access to the OSR for comments
- Links to other related Internet web sites.

Most of the documents are available in Adobe PDF format for rapid search and for easy downloading and printing.

The Internet web site is the joint responsibility of the OSR Openness Coordinator and the OSR Content Manager.

1. The Openness Coordinator is responsible for assuring information on the web site is current and complete. The coordinator decides on the content of the OSR web site and provides the information to the Content Manager.

2. The Content Manager is the single point-of-contact for the OSR Internet web site. He or she is responsible for the timely placement of information on the OSR web site. The Content Manager is responsible for updates, revisions, maintenance, and major modifications to the web pages. The Content Manager periodically examines web site usage by page and recommends which pages need improvement and which could be eliminated. The OSR intends to continually improve the Internet web site to make it easier to use.

The OSR preserves the privacy of interested parties to the web site and does not collect information on visitors other than a simple count of the pages that are visited.

The OSR web site meets overall DOE site requirements, which are established by IPI, and is overseen and supported by the Site Web Master.

## **8.6 READING ROOM**

Regulatory documents are made available to interested parties at the U.S. DOE Public Reading Room. They are cataloged and indexed by the library staff and copies are available for duplication with a modest per-page cost. The U.S. DOE Public Reading Room, open each weekday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., is located at the Washington State University Tri-Cities Campus, Consolidated Information Center, Room 101L, 2710 University Drive, Richland, Washington.

Responsibilities for assuring that the documents are provided to the U.S. DOE Public Reading Room are defined in the OSR Management Directive 2.1, *Information Management*. An index of the regulatory information available at the U.S. DOE Public Reading Room is maintained on the OSR Internet web site.

## **8.7 ACTIONS**

As noted earlier, comments are an integral part of the OSR Openness Policy and Plan. Input on OSR actions and decisions may be received via postal mail, electronic mail, the OSR Internet web site, the OSR 1-800 number, facsimile, telephone or at meetings.

All comments received are logged and tracked in a comment database. Comments are answered individually except where the Openness Coordinator determines, with concurrence of the Safety Regulation Official, that a summary response to numerous similar comments is more appropriate. This would primarily occur during public comment period on formal OSR regulatory actions and documents. Comments in the log are not edited or summarized in any way.

The OSR responds promptly to all comments. The process and responsibilities to make this possible are detailed in the OSR Management Directives and summarized below.

- The Openness Coordinator ensures that comments from the public are retrieved from all sources and logged into the database. Logging includes coordinating with the Information Management Coordinator to ensure that an appropriate document number is assigned to each comment to facilitate tracking.
- The Openness Coordinator determines which responsible member of the OSR could best make use of the comment and provides it directly to that person.
- The Openness Coordinator determines if a direct response to the individual who offered the comment is required. If a response is required, the Openness Coordinator assigns a member of the OSR staff to prepare the response. The assigned OSR staff member is identified in the database.
- A due date, generally less than 10 days from the receipt of the comment, is established for response preparation.

The response will be clear and concise -- responding to a question when asked and agreeing or disagreeing with a comment. In disagreeing with a comment, the reason why will be given in clear every-day language. "Comment noted" is not an acceptable response and will not be given.

- The Openness Coordinator ensures that the response is prepared, delivered and recorded.

Comments on formal regulatory actions and documents are consolidated into summaries describing how they were addressed in the regulatory action (if applicable). This information is provided as a formal part of final documents. Summaries briefly describe those significant comments that resulted in substantial change from a draft document to a final document.

## 8.8 INFORMATION PHONE LINE

The OSR toll-free telephone information line is 1-800-253-2723. It provides general information about scheduled OSR activities. The OSR welcomes comments submitted via this 1-800 number.

The effectiveness of communication through the 1-800 number depends on OSR responsiveness; hence, the OSR places emphasis on making sure that comments receive prompt response. The OSR Openness Coordinator is responsible for keeping the information on the 1-800 line current and the communication channel responsive. Thus, the Openness Coordinator:

- Decides what information should be used on the 1-800 number, paying particular attention to announcing meetings. Prepares the scripts and makes appropriate changes to the 1-800 message.
- Monitors the 1-800 number for incoming comments or messages, responds to the caller (if requested), and consults with OSR staff when necessary.

- Maintains a log of all comments or requests received on the 1-800 number as well as how each was addressed.

To some, the 1-800 number recorded messages might appear impersonal. Therefore, those who wish are encouraged to make use of the direct telephone channels to speak to someone in the OSR or to arrange a face-to-face meeting.

## **9.0 REFERENCES**

RL/REG-97-05, *Office of Safety Regulation Management Directives*, Handbook 2.1, "Information Management"

RL/REG-97-10, *Regulatory Plan*, Rev. 4, 2001

RL/REG-98-06, *Corrective Action/Enforcement Action Program*, 2001

RL/REG-97-05, *Office of Safety Regulation Management Directives*, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection, 2001.  
MD 2.1, "Information Management"

## **10.0 LIST OF TERMS**

DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
GSSC	General Support Services Contractor
HAB	Hanford Advisory Board
IPI	Office of Intergovernmental, Public, and Institutional Affairs
ORP	Office of River Protection
RPP-WTP	River Protection Project Waste Treatment Plant
RL	Richland Operations Office
OSR	Office of Safety Regulation